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ON THE CORN LAWS,  
AND THE  
CLAIMS OF THE AGRICULTURISTS TO  
RELIEF FROM TAXATION.

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S P E E C H

OF

**JOSEPH HUME, Esq., M.P.,**

ON  
THE MOTION OF THE MARQUESS OF CHANDOS,

IN

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS,

ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 1836.

*Extracted from the "MIRROR OF PARLIAMENT."*

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**M. L'ABBÉ VERREAU**

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assigned for that demand is that the barley is grown by the farmers; but by the same rule the malt should be every article subjected to excise duty should be allowed to use enough of it for his own consumption; and it will be those who import wine or brandy ought to be allowed to use enough of it for their own consumption; and it will be the Chancellor of the Exchequer who will give to this opinion I think his Noble Friend.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 1836.

The Honorable Member for North Yorkshire, who supported the motion, asks why the landed proprietor should be prevented from making the best bargain he can for the

**MR. HUMPHREY.**—Sir, I was anxious that the Noble Marquess should have deferred his motion until the Select Committee, now sitting to consider the state of the agricultural interest, had terminated their inquiries, and had reported to this House, as we should then have had before us the evidence taken, and the opinion of that Committee on this important subject; but, as the claims of the landed interest have been thus prominently put forward by the Noble Lords who have addressed the House, I shall endeavour, before I sit down, to prove to the House that the agricultural interests have no just claim to be relieved more than the other interests in the country.

The Noble Marquess, who introduced the motion, has informed the House that he asks no relief for the agricultural interests which he does not equally demand for the other classes of the community; but the Noble Lord (Dartington) who spoke last is not so reasonable. He says, that there are three ways in which relief may be afforded to the land—by lessening the burden of general taxation—by relief from local taxation—and by an alteration of the currency. As an alteration of the currency must affect all interests of the country alike, I shall hereafter make some remarks thereon; and the subject of local taxation, such as bridge, gaol, poor rates, &c., will come more regularly before the House in a few days, when I intend to introduce a plan for establishing a county board to manage the financial affairs of counties.

With respect to general taxation, I shall distinctly prove that the agriculturists are not only not taxed beyond other classes in the country, but that they do not pay their fair proportion of the burdens of the State. The Noble Lord has, indeed, proposed, one means of relief, at variance, however, with the claim of the Noble Marquess, the Member for Buckinghamshire, that the farmers should be allowed to malt barley for their own use free of duty—and the reason

assigned for that demand is, that the barley is grown by the farmers; but, by the same rule, the manufacturer of every article, subjected to excise duty, should be allowed to use enough of it for his own consumption, free of duty; and those who import wine or brandy, ought to be allowed all they consume free of duty. The one request would be equally fair and reasonable as the other; but, will the Chancellor of the Exchequer agree to this? In this opinion I think the Noble Marquess must agree with me, and differ from his Noble Friend.

The Honourable Member for North Yorkshire, who supported the motion, asks why the landed proprietor should be prevented from making the best bargain he can for the produce of his land and capital; and I willingly, in every case, concede to him that right; but, at the same time, I ask him to allow other persons to enjoy the same right with the produce of their labour and capital. The English farmer sells his corn to the manufacturer at the highest price, and buys every manufactured article at the lowest rate; but, I ask, are the manufacturers allowed to go to the cheapest markets to buy their food? No; they are obliged, by the monopoly produced by the corn-laws, and by the importation of cattle being prohibited, to pay nearly twice as much for English corn and meat as they would have to pay, were corn and cattle freely admitted from other countries! I therefore ask the Honourable Member whether that is dealing out equal justice, or whether, with those advantages, he has, on behalf of the agriculturists, any right to complain?

The Noble Lord having alluded to agricultural associations, and to their efforts to obtain relief for the farmers, I shall take this opportunity of noticing the unreasonable and absurd demands of some of these associations; and of shewing how ruinous their plans would be to themselves, and to the community at large, if they could be carried into effect. Their statements are exaggerated, and their expectations quite preposterous. I have, in my hand a Report of the proceedings of the East Suffolk Agricultural Association, at a public meeting held at the castle of Framlingham in November last; and I now see the Honourable Member for the county (Sir Broke Vere) who was present. It appears that the object of that meeting was to take the first step for sending delegates to join the general Agricultural Union of all the agricultural associations in London. It was stated—

That the agriculturists have petitioned Parliament so often, and had received so little attention, that they began to entertain but one feeling—that petitioning alone would not do. That



In July last, at a meeting of that Association, a petition was agreed to, and a Resolution passed, that the members should be instructed to move that the Supplies themselves should be stopped, until his Majesty's Ministers had taken some steps to relieve the agriculturists.

If such language had been used, or such opinions had been expressed, at any meeting of Reformers, what would have been said by the landed gentlemen? The Reformers would have been told that they were threatening the House of Commons, and interfering with the proceedings of the Government. Yet such were the demands of that Association at a time when successive Administrations had relieved the agricultural interest from almost every tax that could be pointed out as bearing directly on land; and when the agriculturists were in reality paying much less in taxes to the State than the other classes of the community. The secretary to the Central Association in London, declared to the meeting that—

In his opinion it was neither the extension of the currency nor the repeal of the malt-tax, nor the consolidation of public rates, nor the commutation of tithes, nor the diminution of poor-rates, nor the introduction of poor-laws into Ireland, nor the breaking up of the meat-trade monopoly, which would alone relieve the farmer. . . . They must effect a change in the present system of acquiring and accumulating wealth,—a system abounding in fraud and productive of the greatest evils; and that the productive classes must be compensated for the capital which the currency measure of 1819 had been the means of unjustly abstracting from them. . . . But (he added) that they would no longer consent to increase the spoils of the gambler on the Stock Exchange; they would no longer uphold that system which, for the last twenty years, had preyed upon the very vitals of the productive classes; and which had made the industry of the country the means of impoverishing itself, while it enriches the speculator and the capitalist.

This attack upon capitalists would be altogether unwarranted in any assembly, but most particularly was it unsuitable at a meeting of landed gentlemen, who have so often complained of similar language being used in other places. I have always, both within and without these walls, raised my voice against such pernicious and erroneous opinions: I say erroneous, for it is evident, that to its capital, England owes much of its present prosperity. Why are Spain and Italy so poor, with an abundant population, and a soil and climate almost unequalled in the world?—Why, but for want of capital? How is France now rising in the scale of nations, but by accumulating capital,—by becoming a manufacturing and commercial country? Therefore, we ought to be the more indignant at hearing this charge made at a public meeting of landowners against so useful and important a

part of the community, as if it were a crime for men to accumulate fortunes by honest and honourable means. I am indignant at seeing thus held up to the people, that class to whose industry, enterprise, and abilities we mainly owe the high rank which England now holds among the nations of Europe. It is alleged by the landowners, that "agricultural prosperity is the foundation of national prosperity." I rejoice in agricultural prosperity when it is not produced at the expense of the other classes of the community; but I must add, that land in England would be of little more value than land in Poland or Prussia, were it not for the capital and industry of our merchants and manufacturers. Nay, more, I maintain that England might exist and prosper, as a purely manufacturing and commercial country, if it did not grow a single bushel of corn; if, in exchange for its manufactures and minerals it imported from the cheap corn-producing countries, every quarter of wheat required in the country. Have I not, then, reason to call the opinions, expressed by this gentleman, at once pernicious and erroneous? But he goes still farther, and says—

The war to which he summoned them was a war from which no good man need shrink—it was a war against injustice, poverty, and idleness—it was a war against that system which divided England into two extremes of luxurious wealth and fearful want—it was a war for the bees of the hive against those who robbed them of their honey—it was a war, though bloodless, that was to be fought on the fields of our country, and in which more laurels were to be gained with the ploughshare than had ever yet been won by the sword on the cannon-planted deck or the tented field.

I have given these extracts to prove to the House the extravagant and ridiculous language of these Unionists; but the language of another speaker exceeded in absurdity anything that had ever yet issued from any public meeting within my recollection; and I submit it, at once, in proof of the unreasonable proceedings of the agriculturists. This gentleman said:—

It was susceptible of clear proof, and he was now stating not merely his own opinion, but the opinion of the Cambridgeshire Association, as recorded in a letter to their chairman, that there was now 100,000,000*l.* less of circulation than there was in 1818, the whole of which sum was, of course, deducted from the value of the produce of British industry. Nothing but an expansion of the currency could meet the difficulty—an expansion to be effected by an issue of notes by the Bank of England, and by the country bankers, and by coining the sovereign at two-thirds of its present value, so that the ounce of gold should make six sovereigns, as it ought to do.

He added that—  
The shipping, the trading, and manufacturing interests, must also receive protection from foreign competition by the imposition

of duties on foreign goods, or, if necessary, even by total prohibition; the immediate consequence of this step would be good prices, good profits, and good wages. This was the unanimous opinion of the numerous members of the Cambridgeshire Society, and they were determined that their opinion should reach the Legislature.

I have now submitted these opinions to the Legislature, as then desired by the speakers. I appeal to the House whether they ever heard of so much nonsense being spoken at any meeting of labourers and artizans, as is reported to have been uttered at this East Suffolk Association of landed gentlemen. Speak of the trash circulated in the penny unstamped! I should be ashamed to see the name of any artizan affixed to such observations. But I leave the members of the Association now present to explain or defend such proceedings, as they best can, whilst they are making fresh demands for relief from taxation; and I would ask whether there really is, at present, that agricultural distress which the Noble Lords have alleged? I speak with confidence when I say that there is not, and, if I am correct in my information, there ought not to be more distress in that than in any other interest. As regards taxation, I repeat that the agriculturists have been specially favoured, and exempted from many taxes which all other classes of the community pay; and that they do not pay any one tax from which other classes are exempted. The Noble Marquess refers to the evidence before the Committee, now sitting to inquire into agricultural distress. I have read that portion of the evidence which has been printed, and find no proofs of distress at present existing.

As regards the increase of currency which the Noble Lord (Darlington) considers to be one means of relief, it appears, by the evidence, that farmers have no difficulty in getting what money they require, if they have good security to give; and, I am sure this House would not desire that money should be lent on bad security. Mr. Evan David was asked—

Do the farmers now receive accommodation as easily as they used to do?—They now get a little more accommodation, in consequence of the joint-stock banks having been recently established in our neighbourhood, and on more easy terms.

Mr. Jacob was asked—

You have no account of a deficiency of capital in agriculture in any part of the country?—No; for the agriculturist can get any money he pleases, at low interest, if he have good security.

I can state to the Noble Marquess, for his satisfaction, that there is more money at present in the country, than there was in the days of inconvertible paper; and that

there is, now, no want of currency, nor has there been any for the last ten or twelve years. It is not possible to ascertain the amount of circulating medium in the country to a certainty; but I shall hereafter submit to the House the most correct account I have been able to procure of the metallic and paper currency in England and Wales, on the average of the six years 1814 to 1819, and of the six years 1829 to 1834. If, therefore, distress exist among the agriculturists, it must arise from other causes than want of currency. Nothing indeed can be more senseless and indefinite than the clamour against the change made in the currency in 1819; and the complaints of want of money as the cause of low prices, since that period; and particularly in 1834 and 1835. In this vague way the president of the Cambridgeshire Agricultural Society stated to the Committee, that he thought the contraction of the currency to be one cause of the fall of agricultural produce. He was asked—

Why he thought so?—"I can only state in a general way that I have observed, that when there has been a contraction of the currency, prices have fallen, and when there has been an expansion, they have generally risen."

But, let us look fairly at the object of the Noble Marquess's motion,—“a reduction of taxation,”—and inquire whether the agriculturists are in a condition to demand reduction of taxation in preference to other classes. I shall prove that they are not entitled to be specially relieved. The House and the public have been somewhat led away in respect to the claims of the agriculturists, generally, without due consideration of whom that class consists. My Honourable and Learned Friend the Member for Bath, some days ago, stated, very properly, to the House, that there were three classes of persons comprehended under the term agriculturists, and that we could not come to any just conclusion on the claims set forth on their behalf without considering their character and situation separately. It comprehends the landowners, the farmers, and the labourers. With respect to the latter class, I would ask any Member of the present Agricultural Committee whether the evidence before them does not shew that the condition of the agricultural labourers is much better at this time than it has been for many years past—perhaps better than it ever was? The evidence clearly proves their improved condition; and some of the witnesses go so far as to say, that the labourers are better off than the small farmers are. Mr. John Rolfe is asked—

What should you say the condition of the labourer is at present?—I consider the condition of the labourer at present, where there is plenty of employment, is very good.



Are there many labourers out of employment?—Not a great many.

Another witness, J. Smallpiece, Esq.—

Then the condition of the labourer has improved rather than not?—I think the labourer never was better off.

Mr. T. Bowyer—"considered the condition of the labourers in a much better state than formerly." Mr. Evan David stated, "that the condition of the labourers in Glamorgan-shire was comparatively better than that of the farmers—that they were very well off."

Mr. Jacob, another witness:—

You state that the labourers, generally speaking, enjoy more of the luxuries of life than they did forty or fifty years ago?—Yes.

You believe, upon the whole, there has been an improvement in agriculture and in cultivation in this country?—Yes.

Nothing can be more conclusive against the Noble Marquess, as to the state of the agricultural labourer, than this evidence given before his own Committee. If, indeed, we consider the money-amount of his wages, and the relative prices of every article of necessity and comfort now, and at former periods, it must be evident that the situation of the labourer is much better at present. When wheat was 120s. to 140s. the quarter, the wages of an agricultural labourer was 15s. or 16s. per week; and now that wheat is at 56s. to 60s., he receives from 9s. to 12s. In the former period he could scarcely buy a bushel of wheat with his week's wages, now he can buy one-and-a-half or two bushels. In proportion to the money-wages and price of corn the labourers are better off. "*We are paying, (a witness says), with beer, 9s. 6d. a-week, equal to two bushels of wheat.*" Clothing and other necessary articles are now from 40 to 50 per cent. lower in price than they were in the time of high-priced corn, as I shall shew before I sit down.

It is truly gratifying to me that the fall, which has taken place in the various articles of British manufacture, has not been accompanied by a corresponding fall in the wages of labour; and we consequently find a greater degree of comfort and ease amongst the working classes than have existed for many previous years in this country; and it is one of many reasons I have to urge for the repeal of the corn-laws, which increase the price of food. At the present moment the artisans and labourers are comfortable, but no thanks are due to the landed interest for that blessing. The operation of high or low prices of food on the comfort and situation of the working classes is but ill understood, although few subjects deserve the attention of the House more. It may be generally taken that three-fourths



and cultivating their cold clayey soils improperly in wheat. Some may pay very heavy rents, and others may, by bad management, use twice the number of horses necessary for their farms; but there is no claim, on these grounds, for exclusive relief from taxation. The farmers examined before the Committee were unable to point out any direct public tax which pressed upon them, except 1*l.* 8*s.* 9*d.* for a riding horse, and the window-duty, which, including the duty on servants on a farm of 500 acres, did not amount to more than 10*l.* or 12*l.* a-year: the county-rate was also considered very trifling. Mr. John Kemp is asked—

With regard to the assessed taxes, would it be any relief to you if the remainder of those were taken off horses and off windows? —Yes; it would be a relief, but not to any extent. The taxes for my windows and horses and servants, on a farm of 500 acres in Essex, are about 10*l.* or 12*l.* a-year.

Mr. John Rolfe, a farmer and appraiser of farming-stock, renting from 200 to 300 acres, in the county of Bucks, was asked—

Is there any other tax (than the malt-tax) which presses immoderately upon the farmer?—No, except the assessed taxes. I pay for my riding-horse 1*l.* 8*s.* 9*d.*, and for my groom 1*l.*

No tax but the window-tax presses on the farmer, and I pay for that 4*l.* a-year. There is a county-rate, the removal of which would amount to something, but not a great deal.

Is there any other tax that presses on the farmer?—No direct tax that I know of.

Mr. Henry Moreton was asked—

What do you pay for your assessed taxes?—A mere nothing; our direct taxes are very small. I do not pay on all the land I hold above 10*l.*

He stated to the Committee that his farm consisted of 2000 acres; so that the assessed taxes he pays amount only to a fraction more than one penny per acre. We may, therefore, dismiss the Noble Marquess's motion on the plea of general as well as of local taxation, and consider the farmer's situation as a manufacturer of corn.

In whatever way the farmer may look for relief, the most effectual mode will be by reduction of rent, and by strict economy; and the question before us, therefore, becomes almost entirely a landlord's question. I consider the landowners as supplying the capital of land to the farmers, who are the manufacturers of corn, in the same way as the capitalist supplies the manufacturer with money to carry on his business. Not only must the landowner and capitalist receive a proper interest; but the manufacturer and farmer must derive the usual profits for their capital, time, and labour, or they will not be able to continue their business. If the profits of the manufacturer are high, the interest of capital will be so likewise,—if the price of agricultural

produce rises, the landowners will take care to raise their rents on the renewal of every lease, and if prices fall they are obliged to lower them accordingly; so that high prices and profits will, in a period of years, benefit only the capitalist and landlord, whilst they injure the great mass of the community. Yet, under the false idea that their own condition would be improved by high prices, farmers in general have joined with their landlords in supporting the corn-laws and high prices, though, as I have already shewn, it is their true interest, as much as that of other manufacturers, that food and necessaries should be cheap. The only permanent means, therefore, in my opinion, of improving their condition is the reduction of taxation of every kind, whether imposed by the State, by the county, or by the parish; and their efforts should therefore be made, in conjunction with all other classes, to enforce reductions in every department to the lowest scale on which the government, general and local, can be carried on in peace and security. The farmer has an equal advantage in the low price of food, clothing, and general necessities with every other manufacturer who, as experience shews, profits by reduced prices of food, in carrying on his business, with less capital, and in ensuring at the same time a more adequate return than when prices are high. I regret, therefore, to see farmers encouraged to entertain delusive hopes of high prices, which can only be maintained by the restriction of that commercial intercourse between England and other nations, which tends greatly to secure permanent national prosperity. Corn-laws are the means employed for keeping up high prices—they limit the commerce of the country—diminish the industry of both manufacturing and corn-growing countries; and, at the same time, keep the labourers and farmers in poverty. In proof of this I might state that, according to the evidence before the Committee, though the price of wheat has been low, every other agricultural produce has borne a fair price; and yet it is at the same time alleged that the farmers have been generally distressed.

Having thus spoken of the farmers and labourers, let us look at the condition of the landowners. Noble Lords say they do not possess a monopoly; but I will prove that they have had almost a close monopoly of all articles the produce of the land—a tax to the extent of many millions yearly raised on the rest of the community, since 1815. As I have already stated, there is scarcely a tax bearing on them or upon the land which has not been repealed by their influence in this House—so much so, that when, in



the present investigation, some of the witnesses were asked what mode of relief they would propose; or what taxes they could point out as bearing on the land, after much hesitation and doubt, one or two trifling assessed taxes—the county-rates and highway-rates, &c.—were the only taxes they could point out. For the landowners, therefore, to say they have not received a due share of attention and relief from this House is truly wonderful. The land and its proprietors have been extensively relieved from general taxation in former years; and the recent Poor Law Amendment Act, accompanied by that moral improvement and independence of the labourers, which I consider to be the certain tendency of the measure, will relieve the land from a large portion of the poor-rate. I have been much maligned for the support I gave to that Bill; but, after the experience of two years, I see no reason to regret the part I took. I have taken the trouble to ascertain, and am enabled to state what has already been the effect on the landed interest. A reduction has been effected in the amount of the poor-rates, in those parishes which have come under the Act, of 40 per cent. of the whole rate—and nearly one-half of England has been already formed into unions. The relief to the tenantry, in some parts of the country, has been such that the landowners have declared they will not allow, to the farmers, in future, the reduction of 10 or 15 per cent. which, for some years past, they had made in their rent.

A Noble Duke (Rutland), in another place, has said—That for his own part he had not such sanguine expectations from the result of the labours of the Committee now sitting in the two Houses of Parliament. He felt himself warranted in predicting that the most sure and efficacious relief of agricultural distress would be derived from the Poor Law Act; and he could state the facts upon testimony which could not be doubted; that the reduction of the poor-rates in those parts of the kingdom, which have been already brought under the operation of the Act, amounts to no less a sum than 1,500,000*l.* per annum; If this saving were effected by the sacrifice and at the expense and comfort of those whom we must always consider as deserving our most tender care and considerate attention,—he meant the labouring and pauper classes—he was sure that he should not, and he was convinced that not one of their Lordships would, countenance the continuance of the measure for another day. But he was certain that no such result of the Act would take place.

The Poor Law Amendment Act will also be a great benefit to the country at large, inasmuch as there will be a moral population depending on their own industry, instead of a demoralized population depending upon the parish—for support. The labourers themselves are, also, in a better condition, being at liberty to seek employment

wherever it can be procured, instead of being, as they were by the old system, confined to one parish, or confined in one poorhouse, inducing a system of debasement and idleness; and inevitably causing those mischievous habits and propensities which every Honourable Member knows to be consequent upon a number of idle persons congregating together. I was much gratified at finding, by the Return of criminal prosecutions in the last year, lately laid on the Table of the House, that they amounted to 713 fewer than in the previous year, which may be owing, partly to the operation of that Poor Law Amendment Act, and partly to the improved situation of the industry of the country.

The House is also at this time engaged with the Tithe Commutation Bill, which, if passed into a law on fair conditions, must be highly beneficial to the landowners, to the farmers, and to the country generally. All these proceedings ought to exempt the Legislature and the Ministers from any charge of neglecting the agricultural interests of the country; and I must express my astonishment that Noble Lords should make that charge in the face of all the evidence on the Table of the House, to the contrary. I evidently surprised some Members in stating, on a former occasion, that numerous, wealthy, and powerful communities might exist without landowners; but that landowners would be poor and helpless without manufactures and commerce. I repeat, that this country could bear all the pressure of its enormous debt and taxation comparatively easily, if the landowners had as fair a share of the burdens to bear as their fellow-subjects have; and more so, if the trammels which now limit and impede our commerce were removed; that is, if free-trade were in reality established. I am quite satisfied, that if the opinions of many landowners against free-trade were acted upon to the extent that the East Suffolk Agricultural Association recommend, our highly-cultivated fields would be deserted, and the richest of the landed proprietors be reduced to comparative poverty. It is by capital, acquired by the industry of our manufacturers, and by the commerce of our merchants, more than by landowners, that the credit of the country and its power are supported; and I hope we shall hear no more such absurd opinions as these agriculturists have lately expressed.

I hold in my hand a statement, shewing the relief which has been afforded by the reduction of taxation since 1814, in which all classes of the community have participated. The average amount of taxation and of population have been taken in four periods since 1814, and the amount of

taxes, estimated in gold, and in corn, per head in each of these periods—

**Amount of Taxation and Population in the United Kingdom.**

|                 | Average population of the United Kingdom. | The net average produce of the Revenue of the United Kingdom in paper money. | In gold at 4l. 5s. 10d. per oz. or 18s. 1½d. per Bank Note. | Price of Wheat per quarter. | Taxation per Head. In Gold. | Taxation per Head. In Corn. |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| In the period—  |                                           |                                                                              |                                                             |                             |                             |                             |
| 1814-19 6 years | 20,002,926                                | £9,667,019                                                                   | 55,051,754                                                  | 69 10                       | 2 15 9½                     | 6 20                        |
| 1820-24 5 years | 21,510,017                                | —                                                                            | 56,563,340                                                  | 55 5                        | 2 12 7                      | 7 69                        |
| 1825-28 4 years | 22,886,563                                | —                                                                            | 55,572,129                                                  | 60 9                        | 2 8 7                       | 6 46                        |
| 1829-34 6 years | 24,425,672                                | —                                                                            | 47,984,975                                                  | 64 1*                       | 1 19 1½                     | 4 88                        |

Thus, by comparing the periods, there was a—

|                      | Decrease in the Taxation in Gold of | In the Taxation in Corn |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Between the periods— |                                     |                         |
| 1820-24 and 1814-19  | 4 47 per cent.                      | 20 48 per cent.         |
| 1825-28 and 1820-24  | 7 61                                | 14 89                   |
| 1829-34 and 1825-28  | 19 42                               | 24 46                   |
| 1829-34 and 1814-19  | 28 82                               | 22 54                   |

From this statement it results that there has been, in these twenty-one years, a decrease of taxation, per head, in gold, of 28½ per cent., and, in wheat, of 22½ per cent.; and the corn-growers fully participated in that general reduction of taxation. Corn fell in price from 1814-19 to 1820-24; but since that period the price of corn has risen, whilst the price of almost every British manufactured article has fallen—giving to the agriculturists an additional advantage of nearly 60 per cent. in the purchase of all their clothing, &c.; and it is satisfactory to know that that reduction in the price of manufactures has taken place, by the lessened cost of production, and without loss to the manufacturer. The agriculturists, by this change, can, as I shall hereafter shew, purchase at this time as many British manufactured goods for 100%, as in the years 1820 to 1824 they could purchase for 160%. If the price of

\* The average price of these years, in *The Gazette*, was 59s. 9d., and the addition of 5s. is explained hereafter.

wheat be compared with that of foreign articles, the difference will be 70 or 80 per cent., in most of them, in favour of the landowner. No other portion of the community have profited so largely by these changes of price, as the agriculturists have done; and yet they now come forward complaining of distress, and claiming further special relief.

The importance attributed to the agricultural interest, as compared with other interests in this country, is really extravagant; and its real value should be exposed, and placed before this House and the country. The Right Honourable Baronet, the Member for Cumberland, whom I see in his place, formerly stated that the agricultural interest was the foundation of all the greatness and prosperity of this country;—that the Constitution could not be maintained without that interest, and that the country gentlemen could not be supported if the corn-laws were repealed—a plain admission that the monopoly price of corn must be kept up, at the expense of the rest of the community, to enable country gentlemen to live in luxury,—which is surely contrary to justice and to the principle laid down by the Noble Marquess, the Member for Buckinghamshire, who demands relief to the agriculturists from taxation only on an equality with the rest of the people. If the landed aristocracy cannot exist without the corn monopoly, then let them fall. Why should the country gentlemen take the earnings of the artisan, or any other people's money to support their rank and station? If that doctrine be tenable, the aristocracy may plunder the people, under the guise of a corn monopoly, with impunity; whilst if the poor man were to plunder the rich in any way, he would be severely punished, and perhaps hanged. Such inequality, sanctioned by law, ought no longer to exist.

An Honourable Baronet, then Member for Suffolk, under the same mistake, once stated in the House, that if the country gentlemen did not get their rents the revenue could not be collected. In that, however, he was soon undeceived; for, in 1816, although the rents of land were greatly reduced, and the agricultural interest much distressed, yet the revenue increased in that year. I do not by any means under value the landed interest; but it is a great error to suppose that the welfare of the country and its revenue depend so much upon the landed proprietors and the amount of the rents they receive. They depend more upon other interests in the country, than the country does on them; and, though it may hurt their vanity to say so, the country might, to state an extreme case, prosper without them. If Honourable Gentlemen doubt this, let

them look back to the state of Venice, to Genoa; and, lately, to the island of Idra, in Greece, a barren rock, containing 40,000 inhabitants, which did not grow any corn; and yet procured, without difficulty, when I was there, corn in abundance from other places—the inhabitants being supported by commerce. All we want is money or goods to give in exchange for corn; and it matters not so much as some Gentlemen imagine, whether it be with the landed proprietors of England, or with the landed proprietors across the Channel, that we make the exchange. Let landowners reflect on this, and be more moderate in their claims; and not arrogate to themselves an importance so superior to that of the rest of the community.

By the population Returns of 1831, the proportion of the agricultural, to the other classes, in Great Britain, is 28 per cent.; in Ireland the agriculturists are 63 per cent.; the average number of agriculturists in the United Kingdom being about 38½ per cent. of the whole population. I would ask whether it is to these—little more than one-third of the people, that the interests of the other two-thirds are to be sacrificed. If, in numbers, the agriculturists are so inferior, let us inquire whether they contribute more to the revenue of the country in proportion to the other classes; and whether, on that ground, they deserve special exemption? The net revenue of the United Kingdom in the year ending January 1836, was 46,302,125*l.*, of which the English agriculturists, according to their numbers, should pay 28 per cent., or 11,825,351*l.*, and the Irish agriculturists, 2,716,762*l.*—both, together, 14,552,113*l.* But, if the nature of our taxation be examined, it must be evident that they cannot contribute in that proportion. I have made an estimate that they contribute only 9,500,000*l.* of the public revenue, or 5,000,000*l.* less than their fair numerical proportion. The revenue of Great Britain may be divided into four great branches, namely,—

|                             |            |              |                      |
|-----------------------------|------------|--------------|----------------------|
| The Customs & Excise        | contribute | 72 per cent. | of the whole revenue |
| The Stamps                  | 14         | ..           | ..                   |
| The Assessed and Land Taxes | 9          | ..           | ..                   |
| The Post-office             | 5          | ..           | ..                   |

Making the Total 100

If the habits of the agriculturists, and of the artisans, and other classes, are considered in their use of exciseable and other taxed commodities, by which the revenue is raised, I am fully warranted in stating that the agriculturists do not pay more than I have stated, or about 20 per cent., instead of 38 per cent. of the whole taxation of the country, both direct and indirect.

When I see the great manufacturing, commercial, and



shipping interests considered of little importance by some Honourable Members; I am induced to draw the attention of the House to their magnitude, and to the difficulties they have had to overcome in consequence of the partiality of the law towards the agriculturists and, first, as to the cotton trade. In 1834, there were imported 328,875,428 lbs. of cotton wool, which at the average price of 8s. per lb. cost £10,333,847. There were 1200 spinning and weaving mills, and 100,000 power-looms employed. There were about 34,000,000 employed—one-half in fixed, and one-half in floating capital. The value of the manufacture in that year was nearly £35,000,000; sterling, of which 20,300,000 in value was exported, and 14,600,000 retained for home consumption; the number of persons of all classes, supported by the cotton manufacture being estimated at upwards of 1,500,000.

The following details will give a more complete view of this great branch of our national industry in 1834.

|                                                          |                   |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Cotton wool imported                                  | 328,875,428       |
| 2. Value, at 8s. per lb. average                         | £10,333,847       |
| 3. Number of spinning and weaving mills                  | 1,200             |
| 4. Number of spindles used in spinning                   | 10,041,000        |
| 5. Number of power-looms                                 | 100,000           |
| 6. Amount of capital invested,—namely,                   |                   |
| Of fixed capital                                         | £17,000,000       |
| Of floating capital                                      | £17,000,000       |
| 7. Total capital                                         | £34,000,000       |
| 8. Wages paid to factory operatives,—namely,             |                   |
| Hand-loom weavers                                        | £6,044,000        |
| Calico-printers                                          | £4,325,000        |
| Lace-workers                                             | £1,170,000        |
| Makers of cotton-hosiery                                 | £1,000,000        |
| Bleachers, dyers, fustian-cutters, &c.                   | £4,000,000        |
| 9. Total wages                                           | £17,094,000       |
| 10. Total value of manufactured cotton goods             | £34,820,000       |
| Home Consumption                                         | £14,312,000       |
| Foreign ditto                                            | £20,513,000       |
| 11. Quantity—White or plain cottons                      | 288,500,100 yards |
| Printed or dyed                                          | 274,758,601       |
| Twist and yarn                                           | 76,478,468 lbs.   |
| 12. Number of persons employed,—namely                   |                   |
| Factory operatives                                       | 287,000           |
| Hand-loom weavers                                        | 250,000           |
| Calico-printers                                          | 45,000            |
| Lace-makers                                              | 150,000           |
| Makers of cotton-hosiery                                 | 35,000            |
| Bleachers, fustian-cutters, tool and machine-makers, &c. | 100,000           |
| Total number                                             | 824,000           |

If I suppose the agriculturists to consume one-fourth of the quantity of cottons retained for home consumption; which is an ample allowance, their share would only be 3,500,000*l.*, or 10 per cent. out of the 35,000,000*l.*; and yet the landowners, in this and other places, tell me that the home-market is the best market for the manufactures of the country, and that they would shut out all foreign demand rather than alter the corn-laws. I might with confidence state similar results, as to the home and foreign trade, in the great staple manufactures of woollen, linen, and iron, and ask why the many millions of capital and of persons employed in these and other branches of national industry should be subjected to the monopoly of the landowners. Moreover, and this sentiment need not be said. In some countries in Europe the large proportion of the public revenue which the landed interest contributes might fairly give them a claim to protection for their produce from competition with the produce of other countries; but in England, the landed interest pays less to the public revenue, in proportion to their wealth, than any other interest; and, therefore, has no claim to special relief. In France, M. Humann, the Minister of Finance, stated, on the 29th of April, 1823, that the total revenue of France for that year was 1,000,244,000 francs, of which the agriculturists paid 400,000,000, or 40 per cent. of the whole revenue; and, in answer to a complaint made in the Chamber of Deputies, that the agricultural interest was unduly favoured by the corn-laws, "he strongly combated the opinion of the landed interest being unduly protected, maintaining that the direct taxes paid by the landed proprietors in France, amounted to 400,000,000 francs, or one-fourth of their net income, independent of their proportion of indirect taxes." In Belgium, the direct taxes were, in the same year, 32,500,000 francs, of which 21,631,614 were taxes on land, amounting to one-fourth of the whole public revenue of 83,000,000 francs. If the Duke of Devonshire, and other landed proprietors, were called upon to pay one-fourth of their net rent-rolls, there would then be ground for complaint, and a fair claim for protection and relief; but I have demonstrated that the landowners of England are not taxed in proportion to the landowners in other countries in Europe.

I propose now to prove that the English landowners have been, and are still, specially exempted from many taxes which other classes of the community pay. In 1803, when, by the 43rd Geo. III. c. 161, the house-duty was generally levied, all farm-houses were then exempted; in 1821, when the total number of inhabited houses in

London was 2,429,730, there were 214,339 farm-houses then exempted from house-duty; in 1825, there were altogether 527,549 houses assessed to the house-tax, of which 355,916 were rented above 10*l.* a-year, and 171,739 below that sum. The number of farm-houses in that year exempted from farm-house duty was 136,434—namely, 130,672 in England, 3612 in Scotland, and 2150 in Wales. If I estimate the average rental of these farm-houses at 16*l.* a-year, and suppose their number to have remained the same all the time, the amount of house-tax from 1803 to 1834, on farm-houses would have amounted to 5,000,000*l.* sterling and upwards. When the duty on tiles was imposed, drainage tiles were exempted, and the quantity used has been immense, and has favoured materially the increased produce of the land, which has so generally taken place. Sales of timber on the land, of coppice grounds, of farm produce, stock, &c., have been exempted from the auction-duty, which personal property has paid.

I hold a statement\* of the several taxes which bore almost entirely on Agriculture, and which have been reduced, or altogether repealed, since 1815, amounting

\* A STATEMENT of taxes which bore chiefly on agriculture and which have been reduced, or altogether repealed, since the passing of the corn-law in 1815, shewing the amount of relief given in each year to the landed interest, and the total relief since 1817 to this time:—namely,

|                                                                                                                               | Years. | Amount. |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|---------|
| Horses.—Husbandry horses used by farmers at rents under 200 <i>l.</i> per annum, repealed in 1816                             | 1816   | 150,119 |
| Mules under 13 hands carrying coals, ore, &c.                                                                                 | do.    | 1,156   |
| Horses used by farmers, of farms under 50 <i>l.</i> rent, and gaining a livelihood principally therefrom, but partly by trade | do.    | 60,461  |
| Servants.—Labourers in husbandry                                                                                              | do.    | 5,835   |
| Horses.—Horses ridden by occupiers of farms at less than 200 <i>l.</i> rent                                                   | do.    | 59,186  |
| Horses employed in carrying coal and wood where not more than four are kept                                                   | do.    | 3,939   |
| Horses used by bailiffs                                                                                                       | do.    | 273     |
| Mares kept for breeding                                                                                                       | 1819   | 3,593   |
| Husbandry horses                                                                                                              | 1822   | 470,108 |
| Horses drawing taxed carts exempted from lower rate of duty thereby chargeable at a reduced rate of duty on horses            | do.    | 5,064   |
| Servants.—Husbandry servants occasionally employed as domestic servants                                                       | do.    | 34,374  |
| Carriages.—Taxed carts at the lower rate of duty                                                                              | 1823   | 9,310   |
| Horses.—All horses chargeable heretofore at 3 <i>s.</i> each                                                                  | do.    | 4,044   |
| Dogs.—Dogs kept wholly for the care of sheep by farmers at rents under 100 <i>l.</i> per annum                                | 1824   | 6,876   |
| Horses.—Horses drawing taxed carts exempted                                                                                   |        |         |

very nearly to 1,000,000*l.* a-year; and which, in the several years up to this time would have amounted to 13,000,000*l.* sterling. But I must call the particular attention of the House to the legacy and probate duties imposed on personal property of all kinds passing by descent, whilst landed, or real property, has been altogether exempt from any tax; and we cannot shew, in more

|                                                                                                                       |      |           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|-----------|
| from higher rate of duty thereby chargeable at a reduced rate of duty on horses                                       | 1824 | 11,334    |
| Houses and Windows.—Farmhouses occupied by labourers and servants retained for husbandry (by 6 Geo. IV. c. 7. s. 36)  | do.  | 6,866     |
| Servants.—Husbandry or trade servants employed as grooms by persons assessed for carriages with less than four wheels | do.  | 5,076     |
| Carriages.—Taxed carts at the higher rate of duty                                                                     | do.  | 20,675    |
| Horses.—Mules carrying coal ore, &c.                                                                                  | 1825 | 71        |
| Horses occasionally let to hire by farmers, at rents under 200 <i>l.</i>                                              | do.  | 5,637     |
| Carriages.—Common stage carts drawn by one horse                                                                      | 1832 | 8,716     |
| Servants.—Stewards, bailiffs, overseers, or managers and clerks under them                                            | 1833 | 10,110    |
| Windows.—Windows in farm-houses                                                                                       | 1834 | 35,000    |
| Horses.—Husbandry horses occasionally ridden by farmers at 500 <i>l.</i> rent per annum                               | do.  | 10,000    |
| Ditto, used occasionally for other purposes, or let occasionally for hire                                             | do.  | 2,000     |
| Horses used by bailiffs, shepherds, &c.                                                                               | do.  | 2,000     |
| Dogs.—Shepherds' dogs                                                                                                 | do.  | 3,000     |
| Fire insurance on implements of husbandry and stock                                                                   | do.  | 50,000    |
| Total                                                                                                                 |      | £ 985,824 |

Total Amount of the savings to the agriculturists by these reductions, reckoning from the year after they were made to the end of the year 1835.

|              | Reduced.     | Period.        | Both inclusive.           |
|--------------|--------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| In 1816 .... | £281,695.... | 19 Years, viz. | 1817 to 1835 = £5,352,205 |
| 1819 .....   | 3,868....    | 16 "           | 1820 to 1835 = 61,888     |
| 1822 .....   | 470,108....  | 13 "           | 1823 to 1835 = 6,111,404  |
| 1823 .....   | 52,792....   | 12 "           | 1824 to 1835 = 633,564    |
| 1824 .....   | 6,876....    | 11 "           | 1825 to 1835 = 75,636     |
| 1825 .....   | 49,659....   | 10 "           | 1826 to 1835 = 496,590    |
| 1832 .....   | 8,710....    | 3 "            | 1833 to 1835 = 26,130     |
| 1833 .....   | 10,110....   | 2 "            | 1834 to 1835 = 20,220     |
| 1834 .....   | 52,000....   | 1 "            | 1835 = 152,000            |
|              |              |                | £12,929,577               |

N.B.—Some of these duties are applicable to persons in trade, but to a small extent only,—the whole having been repealed for the relief of the agriculturists.

glaring colours, the gross partiality of the law in favour of the landowners, and the great injustice, therefore, inflicted on the rest of the community. In 1785, the legacy duties were imposed on personal property in Ireland, and no tax on landed property. In Great Britain, Mr. Pitt imposed the legacy and probate duties, commencing the 1st of August, 1797, on all personal property; the rate of charge varying from 1 to 10 per cent. on the capital; and by a Parliamentary Return in my hand, it appears that the aggregate amount of the tax in Great Britain was little more than 1,000,000*l.*, in the first nine years, whilst the amount has been nearly 20,000,000*l.* in the last ten years. The amount of personal property, on which the tax was levied, has gradually increased from 1,000,000*l.* in 1797, the first year, up to 42,000,000*l.* in the last year, 1835; and by the same Returns, the total amount of personal property taxed under that Bill, in 39½ years, was about 941,000,000*l.* at the various rates of from 1 to 10 per cent. on the amount of property. The total amount of tax actually levied in Great Britain, on personal property by descent, in the 39½ years—1797 to 1835—both inclusive, was nearly 48,000,000*l.* sterling; whilst landed property has not paid, during that time, 1*l.* of legacy or probate duty on descent. I will not hazard an opinion as to the value of landed property which has been inherited, by descent, in these 39½ years, to compare it with the amount of personal property that has been taxed. The landed property of the Duke of Sutherland, of 250,000*l.* a-year, did not pay 1*s.*; and we have daily proof of succession to immense landed estates, without their contributing 1*d.* towards the expenses of the Government. Perhaps the greater part of the landed property of the country has passed by descent in that time. Is that equal justice? Should such a system of unequal taxation be allowed to continue? If we add the 48,000,000*l.* of probate duties raised on personal property, to the 18,000,000*l.* of taxes from which land has been exempted, we have nearly 66,000,000*l.* of taxation, from which the land has been exempted in 39½ years.\*

\* Abstract of the Amount of Legacy and Probate Duties received in Great Britain, from 1st August, 1797, to 5th January, 1836—39½ years:—

|                          | England & Wales. | Scotland.  | Great Britain. |
|--------------------------|------------------|------------|----------------|
| Aug. 1797* to 1805 . . . | £ 970,842        | £ 86,599   | £ 1,057,442    |
| Jan. 1806* to 1814 . . . | 6,949,908        | 209,749    | 7,158,658      |
| Jan. 1815* to 1823 . . . | 13,324,502       | 633,950    | 13,958,463     |
| Jan. 1824† to 1834 . . . | 20,432,891       | 1,180,060  | 21,612,951     |
| Jan. 1834† to 1836 . . . | 8,864,768        | 806,182    | 9,670,950      |
| Total in 39½ years . . . | £45,541,914      | £2,266,543 | £47,808,466    |

Parliamentary Papers, 204 of 1823.

† Ibid. 101 of 1834.



There were also the 5,000,000*l.* of House-tax, from which farm-houses were exempted in thirty-one years; also the duty on drainage-tiles; on auctions, on farm-stock, &c., to a considerable amount exempted from any tax. But these accounts are small, when we look at the sums levied for the landed interest, by the monopoly of food.

If the agricultural interest be in distress, I have clearly proved that it cannot arise from their paying more taxes than other classes pay; and I will now shew that there is little ground for complaint in regard to the prices of the produce of the land, which have been relatively high for the last twenty years. I have prepared a statement of the average prices of wheat, barley, oats, and beans, as published in *The London Gazette*, and in Smith's field of beef and mutton in each year, from 1820 to 1884. My authority for these statements is the Statist

In Ireland the legacy duties were imposed in 1788, but it is stated that no separate accounts were kept until 1815, and the amount was small.

From 9th of May, 1815, to 5th of January, 1823, the amount of legacy and probate duties, in Ireland, was **£315,719**

And from 5th of January, 1823, to 5th of January, 1834 **689,527**

|                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| Total in 18 years | <b>£1,005,246</b> |
| Ditto in 2 years  | <b>128,134</b>    |

|                             |                   |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Ditto in 20 Years (to 1836) | <b>£1,183,380</b> |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|

And comparing this amount of duty with a similar amount paid in Great Britain, the capital, on which these duties were charged, must have been between 25 and 30 millions sterling.

Total of the Capital paid upon, and the Amount of each Rate of Duty in Great Britain, in the 37½ years, from 1797 to 1833, both inclusive—namely, **£435,794,565**

| At 1 per cent. |             |
|----------------|-------------|
| 2              | 20,716,610  |
| 3              | 669,613,083 |
| 4              | 216,480,913 |
| 5              | 12,322,786  |
| 6              | 33,651,661  |
| 7              | 14,366,888  |
| 8              | 11,626,650  |
| 10             | 96,439,339  |

Total amount of Capital taxed, and amount of Tax, in the United Kingdom, to 1836—

|               | Capital.     | Duty.       |
|---------------|--------------|-------------|
| Great Britain | £910,905,995 | £47,808,466 |
| Ireland       | 30,000,000   | 1,183,380   |

United Kingdom **£940,905,995** **£48,991,846**

Average prices of grain from 1820 to 1834 inclusive, as pub-

tical Tables published with the sanction of Government. The average price of wheat in the five years, 1820-24, was 55s. 5d. per quarter; and the price of beef and mutton, 3s. 3d. per stone. The price of wheat in the next four years, 1825-28, was 60s. 2d., or a rise of 8½ per cent.; and the price of beef and mutton, from 4s. 3d. to 4s. 7d. per stone. In the next six years, 1829-34, the price of wheat was 64s. 1d., or a rise of 6½ per cent., as compared with 1825-28; and beef and mutton, from 3s. 8d. to 4s. 6d. per stone. In 1835 the price of wheat was low; but the prices of other grain, of cattle, of wool, &c., were high. If the average price of 1835 be included with the six preceding years, the average of the seven years will be by *The Gazette* 56s. 3d., but in reality 61s. 3d., as compared with the five years, 1820-24. If the average prices of the first period of five years, of 1820-24, be compared with the last period of six years, 1829-34, there has been a rise of 15 per cent. in prices since 1820-24. The average of the six years, 1829-34, was 59s. 1d. by *The Gazette*; and I

lished in *The London Gazette*, and the prices of beef and mutton in Smithfield Market during the same period, with the average prices of three periods.

|                       | Wheat   |    | Barley  |    | Oats    |    | Beans   |    | Beef—Mutton, in Smithfield. |    |           |    |      |    |
|-----------------------|---------|----|---------|----|---------|----|---------|----|-----------------------------|----|-----------|----|------|----|
|                       | per qr. |    | per qr. |    | per qr. |    | per qr. |    | Jan.                        |    | Aug.—Jan. |    | Aug. |    |
|                       | s.      | d. | s.      | d. | s.      | d. | s.      | d. | s.                          | d. | s.        | d. | s.   | d. |
| 1820                  | 65      | 10 | 33      | 10 | 24      | 9  | 43      | 4  | 4                           | 0  | 4         | 0  | 3    | 10 |
| 1821                  | 54      | 5  | 26      | 0  | 19      | 6  | 30      | 11 | 3                           | 8  | 3         | 2  | 6    | 2  |
| 1822                  | 43      | 3  | 21      | 11 | 18      | 2  | 24      | 6  | 2                           | 6  | 2         | 5  | 2    | 8  |
| 1823                  | 51      | 9  | 31      | 7  | 22      | 11 | 33      | 12 | 9                           | 2  | 9         | 2  | 8    | 3  |
| 1824                  | 62      | 0  | 36      | 5  | 24      | 10 | 40      | 1  | 3                           | 6  | 4         | 0  | 3    | 5  |
| Average of five years | 55      | 5  | 29      | 11 | 22      | 0  | 34      | 4  | 3                           | 3  | 3         | 3  | 3    | 4  |
| 1825                  | 66      | 6  | 40      | 1  | 25      | 8  | 42      | 10 | 4                           | 7  | 4         | 8  | 5    | 2  |
| 1826                  | 56      | 11 | 34      | 5  | 26      | 9  | 44      | 3  | 4                           | 9  | 4         | 2  | 4    | 8  |
| 1827                  | 56      | 9  | 36      | 6  | 27      | 4  | 47      | 7  | 4                           | 7  | 4         | 8  | 3    | 10 |
| 1828                  | 60      | 5  | 32      | 10 | 22      | 6  | 38      | 4  | 4                           | 4  | 3         | 10 | 3    | 10 |
| Average of four years | 60      | 2  | 35      | 11 | 25      | 7  | 43      | 3  | 4                           | 7  | 4         | 4  | 5    | 4  |
| 1829                  | 66      | 3  | 32      | 6  | 22      | 9  | 36      | 8  | 4                           | 1  | 4         | 4  | 8    | 4  |
| 1830                  | 64      | 3  | 32      | 7  | 24      | 5  | 36      | 1  | 4                           | 1  | 3         | 9  | 4    | 3  |
| 1831                  | 66      | 4  | 38      | 0  | 25      | 4  | 39      | 10 | 4                           | 0  | 4         | 0  | 4    | 3  |
| 1832                  | 58      | 8  | 33      | 1  | 20      | 5  | 35      | 4  | 3                           | 2  | 3         | 2  | 4    | 6  |
| 1833                  | 52      | 11 | 27      | 6  | 18      | 5  | 33      | 2  | 3                           | 9  | 3         | 9  | 4    | 10 |
| 1834                  | 46      | 2  | 29      | 0  | 20      | 11 | 35      | 3  | 3                           | 2  | 3         | 2  | 4    | 5  |
| Average of six years  | 59      | 1  | 32      | 1  | 22      | 0  | 36      | 0  | 4                           | 1  | 5         | 8  | 4    | 6  |

will explain why I have entered it at 64s. 1d. Mr. Page, in his evidence before the Sale of Corn Committee, stated, that the reduction in the average price of wheat, by the alteration in the mode of taking the averages in 1828, was at the least 5s. per quarter; and I have, therefore, added 5s. per quarter to 59s. 1d., to make the actual price of 64s. 1d.—a fair comparison can thus be made of the prices at those two periods. It is necessary to explain how the averages have been altered, by which the import duty on foreign corn is regulated, so as to give in *The Gazette* a lower average price since 1828 than before. By 31 Geo. III. c. 30, the average prices of corn were struck by the proper officers, from Returns sent from the twelve maritime districts in England, and the four districts in Scotland. Irish corn was then excluded from the Returns, and continued to be excluded from the averages, until the Act of 1827, when, by 7 and 8 Geo. IV. c. 58, all corn, the produce of the United Kingdom, was included in the averages. From that year a large quantity of Irish corn (which is generally from 10 to 15 per cent, lower in price than English corn) has been included. Moreover, the Returns have, since 1827, been made from 150 places, instead of the twelve maritime districts in England, and the four in Scotland, as before. The quantities returned as sold were, from that time, greatly increased, and the averages lowered, by which the rates of duty on foreign corn have been increased. By the Report on the Table, it appears that, in the three years, 1825-27, the average yearly quantity sold, by which the averages were struck, was 1,976,263 quarters.\* In the three years, 1829-31, the quantity was 2,838,620 quarters. In the three years, 1832-34, there were 3,818,298 quarters; and in 1835 there were 3,927,620 quarters reported. I deem it important that these changes, which give an

\* Total quantity of wheat returned on which the averages were struck. (See First Report on Agricultural Distress, Appendix 4).

|                                            | Qrs.      |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1825                                       | 2,020,472 |
| 1826                                       | 1,886,737 |
| 1827                                       | 2,026,580 |
| Average, 1,976,263 qrs. from 12 districts. |           |
| 1828 Year of new corn-laws.                |           |
| 1829                                       | 2,573,376 |
| 1830                                       | 3,140,997 |
| 1831                                       | 2,801,487 |
| Average, 2,838,620 qrs. from 150 places.   |           |
| 1832                                       | 3,295,662 |
| 1833                                       | 3,600,321 |
| 1834                                       | 3,758,910 |
| Average, 3,818,298 qrs.                    |           |
| 1835                                       | 3,927,620 |

advantage of at least 5s. a quarter on the monopoly price to the corn-growers, should be well understood by the House.

To ascertain, with any degree of accuracy, the advantage in prices to the landed interest by the corn-laws, we must ascertain what the prices have been in France, and other adjacent countries, for the last fifteen or twenty years, and compare them with the prices in England. There are three averages of wheat taken in France under the corn-laws there, and the prices are very different in each district; but they are taken from thirty-six places only, all large towns, and the averages must be of the best kinds of grain. It must also be observed that the quality of grain in France is about fifteen to twenty per cent. inferior to that of the grain of England; and allowance should, therefore, be made, accordingly, in any comparison of the prices of corn. France is also injured by her corn-laws; for though contiguous to the cheap corn countries of Italy, she cannot import from them until the prices exceed those fixed by her corn-laws; hence the great difference and inequality of price of corn in different parts of France, scarcely intelligible to those who are ignorant of the working of the corn-laws. I have prepared a statement of the prices of wheat in France for the last fifteen years, compared with the prices in England for the same period, which will shew the great difference and variety of price that has existed.

| Yearly average price of Wheat in England. |       |                   |           | Yearly average price of Wheat in France per Imperial Quarter in francs and in shillings. |           |                |        |
|-------------------------------------------|-------|-------------------|-----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|----------------|--------|
| s.                                        | d.    | Average price per |           | Per Hectolitre.                                                                          | Per Quar. |                |        |
|                                           |       |                   |           | s.                                                                                       | d.        | Average prices |        |
| 1820..                                    | 65 10 | price per         | In. ..    | 16 54                                                                                    | 37 11     |                |        |
| 1821..                                    | 54 5  | Im. Quar.         | crease .. | 18 66                                                                                    | 42 9      |                |        |
| 1822..                                    | 43 8  | 55s. 5d.          | per ..    | 14 4                                                                                     | 32 3      | 38s. 1         | In-    |
| 1823..                                    | 31 9  | .....             | cent ..   | 18 20                                                                                    | 41 8      |                | crease |
| 1824..                                    | 62 0  | .....             | 8.67 ..   | 15 34                                                                                    | 35 7      |                | per    |
| 1825..                                    | 66 6  | .....             | .....     | 14 66                                                                                    | 33 7      |                | cent.  |
| 1826..                                    | 56 11 | 60s. 2d.          | .....     | 15 22                                                                                    | 34 10     | 38s. 10d.      | 2 17   |
| 1827..                                    | 56 9  | .....             | .....     | 16 50                                                                                    | 37 10     |                |        |
| 1828..                                    | 60 5  | .....             | .....     | 21 51                                                                                    | 49 3      |                |        |
| 1829..                                    | 66 3  | .....             | 6.65 ..   | 22 26                                                                                    | 51 0      |                | 18 75  |
| 1830..                                    | 64 3  | .....             | .....     | 21 2                                                                                     | 48 2      |                |        |
| 1831..                                    | 66 4  | 59s. 1d.          | .....     | 21 95                                                                                    | 50 4      | 46s. 1d.       |        |
| 1832..                                    | 58 8  | 64s. 1d.          | .....     | 24 7                                                                                     | 55 2      |                |        |
| 1833..                                    | 52 11 | .....             | .....     | 16 96                                                                                    | 38 10     |                |        |
| 1834..                                    | 46 2  | .....             | .....     | 14 35                                                                                    | 32 11     |                |        |

Average of fifteen years, 58s. 3d. in England. Increase per cent., from the first period to the last, in England, 15.64 per cent. Average of the fifteen years in France 18s. 9c., or 41s. 6d., or 40 per cent. higher in England than in France. Rise of price from first period to last 21.05 per cent. in France.

The price of wheat at this time in Paris is 36s. 8d.; at Bordeaux 45s.; at Orleans 32s. 10d.; at Verdun 23s. to 25s. The price of flour in London is 48s. per sack, of 280 lbs., and in Paris only 28s. 8d.; therefore, flour is 69% per cent. dearer in London than in Paris. I have also prepared a statement of the prices of wheat on the 6th of this month (April) at four ports on the Continent, converted into the price per English quarter, to shew the difference of the same grain in those ports and in London at this time.

| Places.                      | Price.       | Quantity.   | Price per English Quarter. | Quality.     | Mean Price per Quarter in London. | With the Import Duty on foreign Corn at 42s. 8d. per Quarter, equal to the following Rates per cent. on prime Wheat. |
|------------------------------|--------------|-------------|----------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| At Hamburgh                  | 86 rix dol.  | per last.   | 27 9                       | White wheat  | 57 0                              | 161 0 2                                                                                                              |
| Ditto . . .                  | 78 rix dol.  | per flitto. | 25 2                       | Red wheat.   | 34 0                              | 124 5 5                                                                                                              |
| Antwerp .                    | 84 florins.  | per becta.  | 34 4                       | 1st Red.     | 57 0                              | 151 0 8                                                                                                              |
| Amsterdam                    | 175 florins. | per last.   | 28 3                       | 1st Zealand. | 34 0                              | 184 4 0                                                                                                              |
| Stettin .                    | 34 dollars.  | wispl.      | 23 2                       | 1st quality. | 57 0                              | 151 18 7                                                                                                             |
| Mean price at these 4 places |              |             | 28 1                       | 1st quality. |                                   |                                                                                                                      |



By the Returns on the Table of the House\*, it appears that in the ten years, 1822-31, both inclusive, the average price of wheat in Amsterdam was 31s. 4d. per quarter; the average of all Holland was 29s. in the same period. In Bourdeaux, in the same ten years, the average price of wheat was 43s. 2d., whilst, in England and Wales, in the same period, the average was 59s. 5d.;—so that the price of wheat was 37½ per cent. dearer in London than in Bourdeaux; 97½ per cent. higher in London than in Amsterdam, and 104½ per cent. higher in London than on the average of all Holland. The duty at this time on wheat is 42s. 6d. per quarter; and whether we compare the prices of wheat in England with the prices in France, Holland, or the North of Europe, it is quite evident that our corn-laws, by prohibiting importation, except with a very high duty, give a monopoly to our landed interest of from 12,000,000l. to 15,000,000l. sterling yearly. Some calculations go much higher; but the advantage of 300,000,000l. in favour of that interest, and at the expense of the rest of the community, in the last twenty-one years, is an allegation which calls for the early and serious attention of a manufacturing and commercial country.

Besides the heavy duty on grain of all kinds, there are ninety articles chargeable with duties on importation for the protection of similar articles, the produce of the land in the United Kingdom, which give on all these a monopoly-price to the landowner against the consumers. The following is a list of some of the principal articles taxed:—

| ARTICLES.                       | Quantity.  | Price. | Rate of Duty. | Per Centage of Duty on Price. |
|---------------------------------|------------|--------|---------------|-------------------------------|
|                                 |            | s. d.  | s. d.         | per cent.                     |
| Apples . . . .                  | per Bushel | 4 0    | 4 0           | 100                           |
| Beef . . . .                    | Cwt.       | 40 0   | 12 0          | 30                            |
| Beer . . . .                    | 32 Gallons | 37 4   | 53 0          | 140                           |
| Butter . . . .                  | Cwt.       | 84 0   | 20 0          | 24                            |
| Candles (tallow) .              | Ditto      | 56 0   | 63 4          | 111                           |
| Cheese . . . .                  | Ditto      | 65 4   | 10 6          | 16                            |
| Eggs . . . .                    | 120        | 6 0    | 0 10          | 14                            |
| Hams . . . .                    | Cwt.       | 65 4   | 28 0          | 45                            |
| Hay . . . .                     | Load       | 80 0   | 24 0          | 30                            |
| Hides . . . .                   | Cwt.       | 56 0   | 4 8           | 8                             |
| Leather . . . .                 | ad valorem | —      | 30l.          | 30                            |
| Pork . . . .                    | Cwt.       | 54 0   | 12 0          | 22                            |
| Tallow . . . .                  | Ditto      | 42 0   | 3 2           | 7                             |
| Oils (Rape and Linseed) . . }   | Ton        | 42l.   | 40l.          | 95                            |
| Bacon . . . .                   | Cwt.       | 44 0   | 28 0          | 65                            |
| Spirits distilled from corn . } | Gallon     | 3 0    | 22 6          | 750                           |

\* Statistical Tables, part 3, page 575.

Besides these articles, which may be admitted on paying heavy duties, there are other articles of general consumption, and of the first necessity,—namely, great cattle, beef fresh or slightly salted, mutton, lamb, swine, and malt, which are altogether prohibited from importation. There are no Returns of the amount of consumption of these articles in Great Britain, and therefore no correct estimate can be formed of the additional tax paid, in the form of increased price, by the community in consequence of the complete monopoly which is thus by law established: but the aggregate charge upon the nation, by all these exemptions and monopolies in favour of the landed interest, must soon demand the serious attention of this House, if they are to represent the wants and to take care of the interests of the nation.—

**SIR JOHN TYRELL.**—Is this the French or the English Budget?

**Mr. HUME.**—Only part of the English. I have proved how the prices of every article, the produce of the land, have been kept up in favour of the landowners, and I shall now shew the extent to which the prices of almost every article of British manufacture, and of foreign and colonial produce, have fallen in the same period. If we divide the fifteen years into three periods, it will be found that, on the average of the five years, 1820-24, the price of white cotton cloth per yard was 9*d.*; in the next period of four years, 1825-28, 7½*d.*; and in the last period of six years, 1829-34, the price had fallen to 5½*d.*; so that the prices of white or plain cotton exported from the United Kingdom had fallen 35½ per cent. in the whole period from 1820-24 to 1829-34, and in that period the price of English wheat had advanced 15½ per cent.

|                                               | Cotton cloth<br>exported.<br>Yards. | Declared value.<br>£. | Average<br>price per<br>Yard. |
|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| In the first period of<br>five years, 1820-24 | 791,032,920                         | 29,805,741            | 9 <i>d.</i> 043               |
| Second, of four years,<br>1825-28             | 669,615,711                         | 21,892,212            | 7 <i>d.</i> 845               |
| Third, of six years,<br>1829-34               | 1,509,457,765                       | 36,698,437            | 5 <i>d.</i> 836               |

The period 1825-28, compared with 1820-24, exhibits a fall in price of 13.24 per cent.—1829-34 with 1825-28, a fall of 25.61 per cent.—1829-34 with 1820-24, a fall of 35.46 per cent.

The prices of Glasgow fabrics of book and Jaconot muslins; and of checks, exhibit, in the same years, a fall

of 18 to 34 per cent.† and I am informed by an intelligent manufacturer in Glasgow, that the reduction in the price of cotton fabrics generally has been more than 45 per cent. since 1820. In cotton twist the reduction has been from 2s. 1d. per lb. on the average of the years 1823-28, to 1s. 3d. in the period 1829-34, when estimated on the aggregate quantity exported, and the declared value thereof.

| In the Years | Official Value and Quantity | Declared Value | Yearly Average Quantity Exported | Average per lb. | Fall per cent. one period with another |
|--------------|-----------------------------|----------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------------|
| 1820-24      | 133,139,553                 | 12,591,984     | 26,427,718 lbs.                  | 2s. 1.14d.      | 23.67 per cent.                        |
| 1825-28      | 170,215,790                 | 13,839,050     | 42,553,950                       | 2s. 7.44d.      |                                        |
| 1829-34      | 413,679,912                 | 36,745,532     | 68,778,938                       | 1s. 3.54d.      | 30.6 per cent.                         |

So that the fall in price from the period 1820-24 to 1829-34 was 39 per cent. nearly.

The reduction in printed and dyed cottons has been equally large. In the linen trade the reduction since 1820 has been from 17 to 20 per cent.; in canvas and other branches to a greater extent. By a statement in my hand, the selling price of canvas at Leeds has declined since 1813 upwards of 40 per cent., whilst the wages have fallen only 6½ per cent. The price of the raw material fell from 84½ in 1813 to 24½ in 1833, being a reduction of 71½ per cent.†

|      | Book Muslins, per Yard. | Jaconet Muslins, per Yard. | Heavy Stripes and Checks, per Yard. |
|------|-------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1820 | 10d.                    | 12d.                       | 10d.                                |
| 1822 | 9½                      | 11                         | 9½                                  |
| 1824 | 8½                      | 10                         | 8½                                  |
| 1825 | 10                      | 13                         | 11                                  |
| 1826 | 7½                      | 9                          | 8½                                  |
| 1828 | 7½                      | 10                         | 7½                                  |
| 1830 | 6½                      | 7½                         | 6½                                  |
| 1832 | 6½                      | 7½                         | 6½                                  |
| 1834 | 6½                      | 7½                         | 7½                                  |
| 1836 | 7½                      | 8½                         | 8½                                  |

A fall in prices, in sixteen years, of 25 per cent. on book muslins; ditto of 34 3-5ths per cent. on jaconet muslins; ditto of 19 3-5ths per cent. on heavy stripes and checks.

† Statement of the price of No 37 Canvas, and the wages of weaving a piece of the same, 36 inches wide, 16 threads of warp, 17 of weft, per inch.

|      | A piece of Canvas, No. 37. | Wages of Weaving. | Rign Hemp per Ton. |
|------|----------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| 1813 | 30 0                       | 2 8               | 84                 |
| 1814 | 30 0                       | 2 8               | 60                 |
| 1815 | 28 0                       | 2 8               | 59                 |
| 1816 | 22 0                       | 2 8               | 43                 |
| 1817 | 20 6                       | 2 6               | 41                 |
| 1818 | 21 3                       | 2 8               | 49                 |

The price of hardware of every kind has been reduced in a still greater degree. I hold in my hand a statement\* of the wholesale prices of some of the most useful articles for farm and domestic purposes, such as curry-combs, candlesticks, frying-pans, spoons, &c., shewing a fall in the prices of those articles since 1818, of 30 to 70 per cent., which must have benefited the agriculturists greatly, as well as other classes.

I have a Return, to shew that coals have declined from 30 to 40 per cent.; lime 18 to 20 per cent.; and, in short, every article of home produce, except agricultural produce, has decreased greatly in price.

Of foreign and colonial produce, the prices have fallen to a greater extent than home produce. Cotton-wool has fallen since 1814-19, from 60 to 67 per cent.; † coffee, sugar, and rice, from 28 to 64 per cent. East India pro-

|      |    |   |   |   |    |
|------|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1819 | 23 | 0 | 2 | 8 | 47 |
| 1820 | 23 | 0 | 2 | 8 | 49 |
| 1821 | 20 | 6 | 2 | 8 | 40 |
| 1822 | 20 | 0 | 2 | 8 | 41 |
| 1823 | 21 | 0 | 2 | 8 | 41 |
| 1824 | 19 | 0 | 2 | 6 | 38 |
| 1825 | 19 | 3 | 2 | 7 | 42 |
| 1826 | 18 | 0 | 2 | 6 | 37 |
| 1827 | 16 | 6 | 2 | 6 | 37 |
| 1828 | 15 | 0 | 2 | 6 | 34 |
| 1829 | 16 | 0 | 2 | 6 | 40 |
| 1830 | 17 | 0 | 2 | 6 | 40 |
| 1831 | 19 | 0 | 2 | 6 | 38 |
| 1832 | 18 | 6 | 2 | 6 | 35 |
| 1833 | 18 | 0 | 2 | 6 | 24 |

Statement of Prices of Hardware in the Years from 1818 to 1832.

| Articles.                                   | 1818. | 1824. | 1828. | 1832. | Rate of Reduction. |
|---------------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------------------|
| Bolts for doors. per doz.                   | 6 0   | 5 0   | 2 3   | 1 6   | or 70 per cent.    |
| Curry combs                                 | 2 9   | 2 6   | 1 5   | 0 11  | or 66.67           |
| Candlesticks, inch, brass } per pair.       | 3 11  | 2 0   | 1 7   | 1 2   | or 60              |
| Frying-pans } perewt.                       | 25 0  | 21 0  | 18 0  | 18 0  | or 28              |
| Latches for doors, bright thumbs } per doz. | 2 3   | 2 2   | 1 0   | 0 0   | or 66.67           |
| Shovel and tongs, fire-irons } per pair.    | 1 0   | 1 0   | 0 9   | 0 51  | or 54.17           |
| Tinned table-spoons per gross               | 17 0  | 15 0  | 10 0  | 6 9   | or 60.30           |
| Japanned tea-trays, 20 inch. each           | 4 6   | 3 6   | 2 0   | 1 5   | or 68.52           |

† Average Prices of Imported Merchandise in periods of Years

duces from 20 to 70 per cent.\* Wines have fallen from 5 to 25 per cent.

If we compare the price of wheat, and the official and declared values of British manufactured goods, in the five years—1820 to 1824, when wheat was 55s. 5d. per quarter,

1814 to 1835, inclusive; shewing the gradual decrease in Money value of average prices from

| ARTICLES.                                        | 1814<br>to<br>1819. | 1820<br>to<br>1824. | 1825<br>to<br>1829. | 1830<br>to<br>1834. | Decrease<br>per cent. be-<br>tween the<br>first and last<br>periods. |
|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Cotton wool:— per lb.                            |                     |                     |                     |                     |                                                                      |
| American . . . . .                               | 21d.                | 9d.                 | 7d.                 | 7d.                 | 67                                                                   |
| East India . . . . .                             | 14d.                | 7d.                 | 6d.                 | 5d.                 | 69                                                                   |
| Brasil . . . . .                                 | 25d.                | 11d.                | 9d.                 | 8d.                 | 66                                                                   |
| Total import of all<br>kinds of cotton . . . . . | 16d.                | ..                  | ..                  | 6d.                 | 60                                                                   |
| W. India Coffee per cwt.                         | 93s. 9d.            | 101s. 9d.           | 59s. 4d.            | 67s. 7d.            | 28                                                                   |
| Do. sugar . . . . .                              | 83s. 4d.            | 46s.                | 39s. 6d.            | 31s. 10d.           | 64                                                                   |
| American rice . . . . .                          | 33s. 6d.            | 17s.                | 18s. 6d.            | 18s. 1d.            | 52                                                                   |
| Jamaica Log-<br>wood . . . . . } per Ton.        | £12 9s.             | £8 16s.             | £7 12s.             | £7 11s.             | 39                                                                   |
| Russia Hemp . . . . .                            | £47 16s.            | £34 9s.             | £37                 | £31 16s.            | 33                                                                   |

\* Abstract of Average Prices of Articles imported and sold by the East India Company in the four following Periods; shewing the Decrease in the Price from the first Period.

| ARTICLES.               | 1814 to 1819.<br>Average<br>Prices. | 1820 to 1824.<br>Average<br>Prices. | 1825 to 1829.<br>Average<br>Prices. | 1830 to 1835.<br>Average<br>Prices. | Decrease per<br>Cent. between<br>the first Period<br>and the last. |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Cinnamon                | 11s. 4d. per lb.                    | 6s. 5d. per lb.                     | 5s. 7d. per lb.                     | 6s. 2d. per lb.                     | 46 per cent.                                                       |
| Cloves . . .            | 3s. 8d. "                           | 3s. "                               | 1s. 7d. "                           | 1s. 1d. "                           | 70 "                                                               |
| Cassia . . .            | 15l. per cwt.                       | 7l. 10s. per cwt.                   | 5l. per cwt.                        | 3l. 15s. per cwt.                   | 75 "                                                               |
| Indigo . . .            | 6s. 2d. per lb.                     | 7s. 3d. per lb.                     | 7s. per lb.                         | 4s. 9d. per lb.                     | 22 "                                                               |
| Lac Dye . .             | 4s. 4d. "                           | 3s. "                               | 2s. 7d. "                           | 1s. 6d. "                           | 65 "                                                               |
| Camphor .               | 12l. per cwt.                       | 9l. 10s. per cwt.                   | 8l. per cwt.                        | 5l. 10s. per cwt.                   | 54 "                                                               |
| Pepper, black           | 10d. per lb.                        | 8d. per lb.                         | 4d. per lb.                         | 3d. per lb.                         | 55 "                                                               |
| Saltpetre . .           | 56s. per cwt.                       | 26s. per cwt.                       | 24s. per cwt.                       | 33s. 6d. per cwt.                   | 40 "                                                               |
| Rice, Bengal            | 18s. "                              | 18s. "                              | 16s. "                              | 13s. 6d. "                          | 25 "                                                               |
| Raw Silk<br>of Bengal } | 22s. 4d. per lb.                    | 18s. 3d. per lb.                    | 16s. per lb.                        | 14s. per lb.                        | 37 "                                                               |

from 5

and  
the five  
quarter,

Money

Decrease  
per  
cent. be-  
tween the  
first and last  
periods.

67

69

66

60

38

64

52

39

33

East India Company  
since from the firstDecrease per  
Cent. between  
the first Period  
and the last.

lb. 46 per cent.

70 "

cwt. 75 "

lb. 22 "

65 "

cwt. 34 "

55 "

40 "

25 "

37 "

with the official and declared values of British manufactures in the period 1829-34, when wheat was 64s. 7d., we shall find that wheat has risen in price 15½ per cent., whilst British manufactures have fallen 30½ per cent.\* A rise of 15½ per cent. in wheat, and a fall of 30½ per cent. in manufactures is equivalent to a rise of 66 per cent. in wheat, (manufactures remaining stationary), or to a fall in manufactures of 82 per cent. (wheat remaining stationary). The corn-growers can, therefore command the same quantity of British manufactures with 61 bushels of wheat, that they could in the years 1820-24 have purchased with 100 bushels. Under these circumstances, therefore, the agriculturists ought now to be in a situation, with respect to the prices of food and manufactures, 66 per cent. better than in 1820-24.

Money has also become cheaper, and the land-owners have had the full benefit of that reduction in the interest of their mortgages, and in their farm capital. The public, by the reduction of the 5 to 3½ per Cent., have been benefited, whilst the fundholders have lost nearly one-third of their income; and yet we have an outcry from the landed gentlemen, that the fundholders have not suffered any reduction in their incomes since the reduction of cash payments. In Exchequer-bills, the public paid, in 1816, at the rate of 3½d. per day for 100l., or 5l. 6s. 5½d. per cent.; and the interest is now only 1½d. per day, or 2l. 5s. 7½d. per cent., being less than one-half what it was twenty years ago.

\* Statement shewing the official and declared values of British manufactures exported from 1820 to 1834 inclusive, in periods of years.

| Years.                                                                                                             | Quantity, or official value of exports. | Declared value of exports. | Proportion of official value to declared do. | Fall per cent. of manufactures | Price of Wheat | Price per cent. of Wheat. |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| 1820-1824                                                                                                          | £116,003,895                            | 183,907,594                | 61.41                                        | 40.65                          | 55s. 5d.       | =8.5                      |
| 1825-1828                                                                                                          | 193,148,490                             | 144,411,144                | 1.34                                         | 0.748                          | 60s. 2         | =6.65                     |
| 1829-1834                                                                                                          | 386,885,429                             | 329,006,860                | 1.18                                         | 0.592                          | 61s. 1         | =6.65                     |
| Fall of manufactures, and rise of wheat per cent. comparing the last period 1829-34, with the first period 1820-24 |                                         |                            |                                              | 30.43                          | 15s. 6         |                           |

† Interest on Exchequer Bills.

|                                                                                         | Per Cent.   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| From April 29, 1812, to Feb. 29, 1816, interest 3½d. per day for 100l., or 5l. 6s. 5½d. | £ s. d.     |
| Mar. 11, 1816, — Nov. 21, 1816,                                                         | 3 4 16 10 4 |
| Nov. 22, 1816, — Feb. 24, 1817,                                                         | 4 11 3      |
| Feb. 24, 1817, — Oct. 7, 1817,                                                          | 3 16 0 4    |
| Dec. 17, 1817, — June 14, 1824,                                                         | 8 0 10      |
| June 15, 1824, — Dec. 20, 1825,                                                         | 2 5 7 4     |
| Dec. 20, 1825, — Sep. 30, 1829,                                                         | 2 13 2 4    |
| Sep. 30, 1829, — 1835,                                                                  | 2 5 7 4     |

The fall in the value of money from 1812 to 1835 = 60.98 per cent.



There is only one other branch of industry which I will bring before the House—one of the highest importance to the country, and which has suffered by the corn-law monopoly as much as, if not more than, any interest. I mean the shipping interest; and I regret to have witnessed the shipowners so often amongst the most strenuous opposers of the repeal or modification of these laws. The British commercial shipping interest, though subjected to the high price of food and of higher wages (the necessary consequence of high-priced food), have to compete with the shipping of the rest of the world; and their situation in that respect has not been considered with that favour and attention which their importance demands. It is worth observing that, although the mercantile navy of this country is very properly considered essential to the support of our naval superiority, all relief has been refused most pertinaciously to the shipping interest, whilst relief has been given in every possible way to the agriculturists. For example, very lately, the insurance-duty on farm stock and farm implements was taken off, and it is proposed, in this year, to remove the duty on insurance of farm buildings; but the marine insurance is continued, as if to press on the already oppressed shipping interest. By the official Returns, on the 31st of December, 1835, the number of ships, for the United Kingdom, was 25,516, measuring 2,783,761 tons, and navigated by 171,020 men. The estimate of the value of these ships, new and old, at 7 $\frac{1}{2}$  10s. per ton, will give the total value of the mercantile marine of the British empire at 20,878,207 $\frac{1}{2}$  of fixed capital; and if the seamen's wages be estimated at 45s. per month on the average, their monthly pay of 384,795 $\frac{1}{2}$ l. if employed only ten months in the year, would amount to 3,847,950 $\frac{1}{2}$ l. The price of provisions for the British shipping may be fairly estimated at 30 to 40 per cent. higher in England than at Hamburg and other continental ports; and timber for ship-building continues subjected to heavy duties. If the rates of freight had continued high, to cover those high wages and high-priced food and building materials, the shipowners would have had little ground of complaint; but freights, to every part of the world, have fallen to a great extent. The average freight of transports in 1814 was 22s. 6d.; in 1820, 14s. 6d. per ton; and for the last five or six years, 13s. The freights paid in Liverpool, to and from the West Indies, have fallen from 40 to 50 per cent. since 1814.\* From Liverpool to the United States there has been a decline in freight of 49 per cent. since 1820, and of 85 per cent.

| Average Rate of Freight paid in Liverpool |       |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|-------------------------------------------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| From                                      | 1814  | 1815 | 1816 | 1817 | 1818 | 1819 | 1820 | 1821 | 1822 |
| Demerara—on sugar and coffee, per cwt.    | 9s.   | 8s.  | 7s.  | 6s.  | 5s.  | 3s.  | 6d.  | 1821 | 1822 |
| Ditto—cotton, per lb.                     | 3d.   | 2d.  | 2d.  | 1d.  | 1d.  | 1d.  | 1d.  | 1821 | 1822 |
| New Orleans—cotton                        | war   | war  | war  | 1d.  | 1d.  | 1d.  | 1d.  | 1821 | 1822 |
| Canada—ashes, per ton, of 40 feet         | 110s. | 90s. | 80s. | 60s. | 55s. | 50s. | 50s. | 1821 | 1822 |
| Leghorn—rags per ton                      | 10l.  | 8l.  | 8l.  | 8l.  | 8l.  | 8l.  | 8l.  | 1821 | 1822 |
| Virginia—tobacco per hhd                  | war   | war  | war  | 84s. | 50s. | 45s. | 45s. | 1821 | 1822 |
| New Brunswick—timber                      | war   | war  | war  | 8l.  | 7l.  | 7l.  | 7l.  | 1821 | 1822 |
| Quebec—ditto.                             | war   | war  | war  | 8l.  | 7l.  | 7l.  | 7l.  | 1821 | 1822 |

From 1820 it has ranged from 4s. to 5s. 6d. average 3s. 6d.

From 1822, the average has been 4d.

Since 1823, ranged rather less than 4d.; lately 5d.

Now and for several years past, 3 1/2s. 6d.

From the Mediterranean, say Leghorn, Sicily, &c. 40s. is now considered fair.

For several years averaging under 56.

When it fell to about 32s., it is now 35s. to 37s.

From 40s. to 42s.

since 1814.\* There has been much distress in the shipping interest since the war; and the high prices of provisions, wages, and materials, and the low rates of freight, satisfactorily account for the same. If the corn-laws were repealed, the shipping would benefit largely in all these respects, and also become carriers of corn to a considerable extent.

So much has been said by some of the advocates of the landed interest about the scarcity of money, and the difficulty the agriculturists have had to contend with since the resumption of cash payments, that I have taken considerable trouble to ascertain what has been the state of the currency since 1814 to the present time; and the House will be perhaps surprised to hear that there now is, and has been, more money in circulation for the last six years than for the six years preceding 1819. I rejoice at the change which took place in the currency of the country in that year, and I am pleased that I gave that measure of the Right Honourable Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, my support at that time. I should now be sorry to see any attempt made to alter the provisions of that Act, or to tamper in any way with the currency of the country. I admit that, in the change that took place from paper to gold currency, many persons suffered severely; but to retrace our steps would only inflict distress on others, and unsettle every pecuniary agreement in the

\* Freight of fine goods from Liverpool to the United States from 1814 to 1835:—

| Goods per Ton.      |      | Goods per Ton.      |      |
|---------------------|------|---------------------|------|
| s.                  | d.   | s.                  | d.   |
| 1814 . . . . .      | 50 0 | 1825 . . . . .      | 30 0 |
| 1815 . . . . .      | 50 0 | 1826 . . . . .      | 40 0 |
| 1816 . . . . .      | 50 0 | 1827 . . . . .      | 22 6 |
| 1817 . . . . .      | 40 0 | 1828 . . . . .      | 20 0 |
| 1818 . . . . .      | 40 0 | (Average, 28s. 6d.) |      |
| 1819 . . . . .      | 25 0 | 1829 . . . . .      | 20 0 |
| (Average, 42s. 0d.) |      | 1830 . . . . .      | 15 0 |
| 1820 . . . . .      | 25 0 | 1831 . . . . .      | 20 0 |
| 1821 . . . . .      | 35 0 | 1832 . . . . .      | 20 0 |
| 1822 . . . . .      | 40 0 | 1833 . . . . .      | 20 0 |
| 1823 . . . . .      | 40 0 | 1834 . . . . .      | 20 0 |
| 1824 . . . . .      | 30 0 | 1835 . . . . .      | 17 6 |
| (Average, 34s.)     |      | (Average, 19s.)     |      |

The fall in the freights has been gradual from 1815 to 1835—in all,—

Viz., in the period, 1820-24, as compared with the period 1814-19, per cent. fall, 20; ditto, 1825-28, ditto 1820-4, per cent. fall, 16; ditto, 1829-34, ditto, 1825-28, per cent. fall, 33.—Total decline from 50s. to 17s. 6d.—85 per cent.

country: I therefore trust the metallic currency will be adhered to.

By the statement in my hand, the annual average circulation of the Bank of England and of country bankers, during the period from 1814 to 1819, was,—

|                                         |                    |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------|
| In paper                                | £44,248,000        |
| Private deposits in the Bank of England | 1,750,400          |
| Silver coin in circulation              | 4,500,000          |
| <b>Total circulation</b>                | <b>£50,498,400</b> |

which, if reduced to the value of gold currency of this day, at 18s. 1½d. per 17. Bank note, would be 45,816,777½; whilst in the year 1834 the total quantity of money was upwards of 63,000,000½.—namely,

|                                                    |                    |
|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| The Bank of England notes in circulation           | £18,885,500        |
| The notes of country bankers and joint stock banks | 10,376,970         |
| The private deposits in the Bank of England        | 10,529,000         |
| Gold coin                                          | 16,000,000         |
| Silver coin                                        | 8,000,000          |
| <b>Total</b>                                       | <b>£63,791,470</b> |

And, therefore, the total quantity of metallic and paper currency, in 1834, exceeds that of the bonded paper system to the amount of 17,974,693½; being an increase of 39½ per cent. more than in 1814-19. There can scarcely be any mistake in this statement, as all that relates to paper at the respective periods is taken from official Returns. From 1814 to 1819 there was no gold in circulation; and the estimate of gold coin of 16,000,000½, at the present time, to fill up the small note circulation of the Bank of England and the country bankers (which was 14,000,000½) must be moderate. In 1836 the circulation is certainly larger. Some persons have had doubts whether private deposits should be considered as part of the currency or not; but, as they are available on demand, they must be considered in the same light as if they were in the pockets of the depositors, ready to be used; and, therefore, to exhibit the whole of the circulation, the deposits of private persons in the Bank of England must be taken into account. In the yearly average of the first six years these deposits amounted to only 1,750,400½; in the year 1834 to 10,529,000½, which, being part of the preceding sums, makes the total amount of currency at the command of the community,—namely, in the years of high prices, 50,498,400½; and in the year of low prices, 63,791,470½.

Public Government deposits in the Bank have, of late years, been between 3,000,000½ and 4,000,000½; but they have not been noticed in my estimate of either of these

periods. If the high prices of articles in the first period, as compared with the present prices, be observed, if the improved system of banking and the greater facility of payments are considered, it must be evident that 50,000,000*l.* of currency, in the present day, would effect one-half more of payments than that amount could have effected in 1814-19. But as there are 53,000,000*l.* instead of 50,000,000*l.* of currency for that purpose, it is quite ridiculous to complain of the want of currency at the present time as the cause of agricultural or any other distress; and it is to be hoped that the knowledge of what I have now stated will set at rest such complaints for the future.

I believe I have now completely made out my case, and I am ready to submit the various statements I have made, to the strictest investigation, believing them to be substantially correct. In conclusion, I allege that the landed interest have been more favoured than any other interest in the country; that they are not taxed as the landowners in France, Belgium, Holland, and other countries in Europe, where they pay nearly one-fourth of the net rent of the land as a tax to the State; that the landowners do not pay their fair proportion of the general taxation of the empire; and that they have been specially exempted from taxes that would have amounted to 13,000,000*l.* since 1817; that they pay no tax on the descent of landed property, whilst all personal property is taxed with legacy and probate duty, which has amounted to 29,000,000*l.* in the last thirty-nine years and a-half. That the corn-laws give a partial monopoly of all kinds of corn, whilst the importation of cattle, swine, and other articles of animal food, are altogether prohibited, and a complete monopoly thereby established. That there are besides 90 to 100 articles of food, many of them of the first necessity, which are subjected to heavy duties on importation, to protect similar articles the produce of the land, by which the prices of all these articles are raised to the consumers. That the price of corn is 40 to 50 per cent. higher in England than in France, and 80 to 100 per cent. higher in London than in the North of Europe; that the comforts of the working classes, though now considerable, are much diminished by the high price of food; that the manufacturing, commercial, and all other classes, are subjected by those monopolies, to heavy taxation in the price of their food. That, in fact, no class of the community are so clamorous for relief, and who require it so little, as the landowners; and, therefore, the motion of the Noble Marquess ought to be resisted. I will concur in any motion for the reduction of general taxation that shall

relieve all classes of the community—I voted for the total repeal of the malt-tax in the last Session with that view, and I am ready to do so now ; but I see no valid reason, whatever, for the motion now before the House, and I hope the Noble Marquess will not press it to a division. I will add, that if only one-half of the allegations I have made respecting the landed interest be correct, the motion should meet with the decided opposition of the House.



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